

GROWING IN *Grace*

BUT GROW IN THE GRACE AND
KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD AND
SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

– 2 PETER 3:18

GROWING IN Grace

LESSON 5 – VIRTUE

“add to your faith virtue”

(2 Peter 1:5)

ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE

- We are to add the “*things*” God has granted us to our faith to partake in the divine nature – 2 Peter 1:3, 8
 - The “*things*” are the 7 items in verses 5-7 starting with “*virtue*.”
- The list ascends from “*virtue*” to “*love*.”
 - The goal for growth in grace is partaking in the “*divine nature*,” the last virtue added being “*love*” – cf. 1 John 4:8

VIRTUE (ARETE) DEFINED

- “(1) a virtuous course of thought, feeling and action; (1a) virtue, moral goodness; (2) any particular moral excellence, as modesty, purity” (THAYER)
- “properly denotes whatever procures preeminent estimation for a person or thing; hence, ‘intrinsic eminence, moral goodness, virtue,’” (VINE)
- “uncommon character worthy of praise, excellence of character, exceptional civic virtue” (BDAG)
- “properly, manliness (valor), i.e. excellence (intrinsic or attributed)” (STRONG)

VIRTUE (ARETE) IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (5X)

- **Philippians 4:8** (“*virtue*”); **1 Peter 2:9** (“*praises*”); **2 Peter 1:3** (“*virtue*”); **2 Peter 1:5** (“*virtue*,” 2x)
- Context: Becoming “*partakers of the divine nature*” through the knowledge of Jesus as “*He called us by His own glory and excellence (aretē)*” (**v. 3**).
 - The focus is to live like Christ, not any longer in immoral excess (**cf. 2 Peter 2:18-22**).
- Aretē as a goal, along with the courage to reach that goal.

THE GOAL OF PARTAKING IN THE VIRTUE OF CHRIST

- A Christian is one who is seeking to imitate Christ – 1 Corinthians 11:1; Ephesians 5:1
- Imitation of Christ inheres in the term, “*Christian*” – Acts 11:26 – “signifying an adherent of Jesus” (VINE)
- We are to follow Him exactly – Mark 8:34; Galatians 2:20; 1 John 1:8; 2:1, 6, 15; 3:3, 16-18

THE NEED FOR COURAGE

- The concept of courage in aretē is appropriate because a follower of Jesus will experience opposition – 1 Peter 4:12-13
- We will be different – 1 Peter 4:3-4
- We will be challenged – 1 Peter 3:15
- We will be hated – John 15:18-20
- We must be brave, strong, and courageous – 1 Corinthians 16:13; Joshua 1:6-9